

REMARKS

Claims 1-86 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1-11 and 38-49 are withdrawn from consideration.

In the Office Action of February 20, 2004, claims 28-37 and 50-86 were allowed.

Claims 13, 17-27 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but were deemed to contain allowable subject matter. Claims 12, 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for allegedly being obvious in view of *Mizutani et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,641,962), in view of *Nishi et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,464,715), in view of *Torigoe* (U.S. Patent No. 5,231,471), in view of *Matsumoto et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,151,120), and in further view of *Saiki et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,715,037).

Regarding claims 13,17-27, Applicants have amended dependent claims 17-27 to be in independent form as suggested by the Examiner in order to place the claims in order for allowance. Claim 12 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 13. Claims 14-16 are dependent on currently amended claim 12. Claims 28, 50, 64-69, 82-84 have also been amended to correct idiomatic errors in order to place the claims in order for allowance. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections have been overcome in light of the amendments submitted herewith, as a matter of expediency in order to place the claims in order for allowance. Applicants also submit that the above amended claims address the matters raised in the Office Action.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to credit overpayments or to charge any deficiency in required fee to Deposit Account No. 19-3140.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 12, 14-16 and 13, 17-27 are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance. Note to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 

David R. Metzger
Registration No. 32,919
SONNENSCHEIN NATH & ROSENTHAL LLP
P.O. Box 061080
Wacker Drive Station, Sears Tower
Chicago, Illinois 60606-1080
(312) 876-8000

Dated: May 19, 2004